

Ambassador Richard Olson
Visit to Mangla Dam
November 28, 2012
As Prepared

Thank you Chairman Shah. It is wonderful to be surrounded by such incredible scenery. I am pleased to be here at Mangla Dam, a symbol of the long-standing cooperation between the United States and Pakistan. As you know, U.S. government assistance helped build this dam in the 1960s. Since that time, Mangla Dam has been producing more than a thousand megawatts of power, supplying electricity to millions of Pakistanis. The dam also helps to control flooding, and its reservoir provides irrigation water to thousands of farms.

Now, nearly 50 years later, Mangla Dam is in need of repairs to make sure that it continues to produce the energy this country needs. Energy is essential to economic growth. It drives trade, powers farms and businesses, supports job creation, and increases economic opportunities.

I am pleased to announce that the U.S. government will provide WAPDA with up to \$150 million to rehabilitate Mangla Dam, specifically to replace worn turbines with new turbines. This activity can add up to 210 megawatts to the national grid. It will also enable the power house to run more efficiently, which will help keep 600 megawatts of power operational and available. In total, these upgrades will benefit about 3.3 million Pakistanis.

Relieving Pakistan's energy crisis is one of the U.S. government's top assistance priorities. Our commitment to help repair Mangla Dam today builds upon efforts begun in the 1960s. The United States was then, as it is now, committed to working with the Government of Pakistan on this and other large-scale energy projects that help the people of Pakistan live secure and prosperous lives.

In addition to this project we are helping to renovate the power plant at Tarbela Dam, upgrade the Guddu, Jamshoro, and Muzafargarh power plants, and complete the construction of the new Satpara and Gomal Zam dams. We are also supporting energy sector reforms and improving the power distribution system. Together, these projects will add up to 900 megawatts of power generation capacity to the national grid by the end of 2013. 900 megawatts is enough power to supply electricity to about two million households, or an estimated 14 million Pakistanis.

I would like to once again express my appreciation for Chairman Shah's leadership and collaboration on this and other energy projects. It was great to be able to visit Mangla Dam so early in my tenure as Ambassador here, and to learn how continued U.S. investment in this facility will benefit the people of Pakistan, just as it has for the past five decades.

Thank you.